



## Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 06 December 2007

Current Nationwide



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- USA Today reported on the expansion of check schemes across the U.S. as scammers exploit the popularity of online auction, dating, and social-networking sites to find victims. Overseas investigators, working with U.S. postal inspectors, have arrested 77 people this year and intercepted \$2.1 billion in counterfeit checks headed for the U.S. (See item [12](#))
- According to KTTC Rochester, air traffic was brought to a halt Tuesday afternoon at Rochester International Airport in Minnesota, after workers hit a natural gas line. The gas line break forced evacuations and shut down heat to the airport. The assistant airport manager said no flights had to be delayed or rerouted because of the leak, but traffic was grounded for about a half hour. (See item [14](#))

### **DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report Fast Jump**

**Production Industries:** [Energy; Chemical; Nuclear Reactors, Materials and Waste; Defense Industrial Base; Dams](#)

**Service Industries:** [Banking and Finance; Transportation; Postal and Shipping; Information Technology; Communications; Commercial Facilities](#)

**Sustenance and Health:** [Agriculture and Food; Water; Public Health and Healthcare](#)

**Federal and State:** [Government Facilities; Emergency Services; National Monuments and Icons](#)

## **Energy Sector**

**Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels:** Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *December 5, The Florida Times-Union* – (Florida; Georgia) **Power plant construction set.** Construction on a long-planned, \$400 million natural gas-fired power plant in the Sterling community should begin next year and be complete by early 2012, said the president of Live Oaks Co. The company surfaced in 2002 as one of two that wanted to build plants in Glynn County, Georgia, to take advantage of a ready natural gas supply from Southern Natural Gas' recently completed Cypress Pipeline that runs 167 miles from Savannah, Georgia, to North Florida.

Source: [http://www.jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/120507/geo\\_222867179.shtml](http://www.jacksonville.com/tu-online/stories/120507/geo_222867179.shtml)

2. *December 5, Associated Press* – (Mid-Atlantic) **Agency rethinks electric corridors.** Energy officials announced yesterday that they will re-examine a decision to declare a large swath of the Mid-Atlantic and two Southwest states priority areas for new power lines — a nod to opponents fighting proposed lines in their communities. The Energy Department said it would grant a rehearing on its October decision to declare two areas of the country as “national-interest electric-transmission corridors,” a new legal designation designed to foster greater power-line construction in order to ease the threat of blackouts. The Mid-Atlantic power corridor runs from Virginia and the District north to include most of Maryland, all of New Jersey and Delaware and sections of New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.  
Source: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20071205/BUSINESS/112050058/1006>
3. *December 5, Associated Press* – (International) **OPEC holds production steady.** The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries decided Wednesday to keep its output ceilings steady in a move that propelled crude toward \$90 a barrel, but plans to review the situation early next year. The move by the 13-nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting countries appeared to reflect OPEC concerns that it would be counterproductive to raise overall production quotas at a time when prices have retreated about 10 percent from recent record highs. It also seemed to suggest that OPEC now views prices near or above \$90 as acceptable. Still, OPEC’s announcement that it would meet in February for a review of the world economy and other factors indicated that the organization was prepared to increase quotas should prices go much higher.  
Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/05/AR2007120500419.html>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Chemical Industry Sector**

4. *December 5, WCCO 4* – (Minnesota) **EPA to test for chemical vapors in St. Louis Park.** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency plans next month to test about 270 homes and businesses in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, for potentially hazardous vapors. The EPA wants to determine whether vapors from old chemical spills are seeping into the buildings in the western Twin Cities suburb. “It’s an emerging issue nationally. Only recently has technology been able to sample at these very low levels. Recognizing that, we, very quickly asked for the EPA’s assistance,” said a representative of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency commissioner said officials do not see an imminent public health threat at this time.  
Source: <http://wcco.com/health/chemical.vapors.minnesota.2.602720.html>
5. *December 4, Reuters* – (National) **Dow Chemical to shut plants, cut jobs, take charge.** Dow Chemical Co. will shut a number of plants and eliminate about 1,000 jobs to cut costs and direct capital toward businesses with better growth prospects, the largest U.S. chemical maker said on Tuesday. Dow said it would incur a related charge of \$500 million to \$600 million, including severance costs and asset write-downs. The plant shutdowns and job cuts will generate annual savings of about \$180 million, the company

said. “Cost reductions is always good, because the chemical industry is very slow at cost cutting, so clearly this is a step in the right direction,” said one HSBC analyst.

Source: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20071204/bs\\_nm/dowchemical\\_writedowns\\_dc\\_6](http://news.yahoo.com/s/nm/20071204/bs_nm/dowchemical_writedowns_dc_6)

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Nuclear Reactors, Materials, and Waste Sector**

6. *December 5, New York Times* – (National) **Plan to build reactors is running into hurdles.** For the first time in three decades, companies are getting ready to build nuclear reactors in the United States. They intend to do so under streamlined procedures meant to avoid the long delays and cost overruns that crippled the industry last time around. But with early jockeying under way to win government approval for this new generation of plants, ominous signs are emerging that the plans may not go smoothly. In recent years, at a time when nuclear construction was in the deep freeze, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the industry created a method that was supposed to simplify future planning and construction. Under it, manufacturers were to win advance government approval for a handful of reactor designs, and power companies would specify later where they would put new reactors of each type. This approach was meant to ensure that companies would not have to rip out concrete and pipes in the middle of construction to satisfy ever-changing requirements from Washington. That was one of the biggest problems when the industry foundered in the 1980s. Now, Congress has thrown its support behind a new round of nuclear construction, and many people in the electric industry are eager to get going. Three companies have filed applications for licenses to build and operate five reactors. But one company marched in with more than a dozen significant changes to a previously approved design. Two picked designs that have yet to win final government approval. And waiting in the wings is a fourth company that has ordered parts for a design that has not even been submitted to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. “The good news is that there is a real need for power,” said the vice president of the Nuclear Energy Institute, a trade association. “The bad news is that now we’ve convoluted” the steps for getting plants approved.

Source:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/05/business/05nuke.html?\\_r=1&adxnml=1&adxnmlx=1196866857-P7xDP4TbCHyD2GFotdzVSA&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/05/business/05nuke.html?_r=1&adxnml=1&adxnmlx=1196866857-P7xDP4TbCHyD2GFotdzVSA&oref=slogin)

7. *December 5, Associated Press* – (Washington) **Wash. State fines U.S. Department of Energy \$500,000 for spill at Hanford nuclear site.** Washington fined the U.S. Department of Energy \$500,000 on Tuesday for a radioactive hazardous waste spill at the nation’s most contaminated nuclear site. The spill occurred July 27, when workers at south-central Washington’s Hanford nuclear reservation were pumping waste from an underground tank. They tried to unblock a pump by running it in reverse, but 85 gallons of waste spilled onto the ground. “Before the spill was discovered, a series of poor decisions put workers in grave danger from exposure to the tank waste and vapors,” the manager of the state Department of Ecology’s Nuclear Waste Program, said in a news release. Sixty-three workers were within 200 meters, or 656 feet, of the spill and were identified for ongoing medical monitoring. Of those, 13 have complained of symptoms that could be attributed to the spill, including upper respiratory problems, upset

stomachs, headaches, dizziness, eye irritation and blurred vision, said an Energy Department spokesman.

Source: <http://www.dailymail.com/News/200712040736>

8. *December 4, Associated Press* – (International) **U.S. OKs some uranium imports from Russia.** The United States tentatively has agreed to allow limited imports of uranium from Russia, suspending an antidumping investigation that has been in place for decades, according to a filing by the Commerce Department. The imports, beginning in 2011, would be limited by yearly quotas. The department's International Trade Administration filed a notice Tuesday in the Federal Register requesting for comment on the tentative agreement, which is expected to be made final once the 30-day comment period is concluded. The department and Rosatom, Russia's civilian nuclear agency, initialed the agreement on November 27. The importing of Russian low-enriched uranium for use in commercial power reactors has been a contentious issue for years because of concern that Russia, with huge amounts of the material, would undercut America's domestic uranium supplier.

Source: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071204/ap\\_on\\_re\\_us/russian\\_uranium\\_1](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20071204/ap_on_re_us/russian_uranium_1)

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

9. *December 5, Aviation Week* – (National) **Boeing ready to vie for CSAR-X again without competitive debriefing.** Boeing is ready to continue the competition for the U.S. Air Force's combat, search and rescue (CSAR-X) helicopter replacement fleet without the planned service debriefing the company says would have leveled the playing field against competitors Lockheed Martin and Sikorsky, according to Boeing's HH-47 program manager. The company does not want to delay the program any longer, the program manager said during a December 4 press briefing. However, when asked if Boeing could protest the award if it goes to one of its competitors, he said, "If we get to that point, we'll reassess." Boeing won the Air Force contract to build more than 140 HH-47 Chinook variants for between \$10 billion and \$15 billion. But the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has twice upheld protests by the losing competitors, and the program has now been delayed about a year and a half. After Boeing won, Lockheed and Sikorsky received Air Force briefings that described how they stacked up against Boeing's proposal in terms of strengths, weaknesses and risk mitigation. As the winner, Boeing did not get such a briefing. The competitors, Boeing says, have been able to use that information to make improvements with proposal revisions in light of the new requests for proposals resulting from the GAO decisions.

Source:

[http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story\\_generic.jsp?channel=aerospacedaily&id=news/CSAR120507.xml&headline=Boeing%20Ready%20To%20Vie%20For%20CSAR-X%20Again%20Without%20Competitive%20Debriefing](http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=aerospacedaily&id=news/CSAR120507.xml&headline=Boeing%20Ready%20To%20Vie%20For%20CSAR-X%20Again%20Without%20Competitive%20Debriefing)

10. *December 4, Defense News* – (National) **U.S. Army's FCS vehicles designed to adapt to IED threat.** Roadside bombs and other lessons from Iraq drove the U.S. Army to change the passenger-seat and armor designs of the Army's Future Combat Systems

(FCS) Manned-Ground Vehicle (MGV) and accelerate active protection systems (APS) programs for the emerging Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV) effort. “A landmine was something we had last had major experience with probably in World War II and Korea, some limited exposure in Vietnam, but frankly not a major concern to any heavy force,” said U.S. Army Deputy Chief of Staff, programs (G-8). “Now what we are seeing is that every force to include the tank, the Bradley, etc., is dealing with the IED [improvised explosive device] threat. We are mindful of it in everything that we do, so we have this new filter or lens that we ought to use as we evaluate this future MGV.” The suspension and seats inside the 27-ton MGV will be suspended from the ceiling, not bolted to the floor. The hammock-like construction is intended to reduce the shock of an IED blast, a leading cause of brain injury to soldiers in Iraq. Furthermore, the MGV armor is to be made of replaceable parts that can be changed as technology improves.

Source: <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=3228064&C=america>

11. *December 4, ISR Journal* – (National) **Air-launched missile defense system passes test.** A key component of an air-launched missile defense system demonstrated its ability to acquire and track a ballistic missile target in the boost phase, according to Raytheon. The December 3 intercept of a test ballistic missile at White Sands Missile Range, New Mexico, occurred during a flight test of the infrared seeker component of the Network Centric Airborne Defense Element (NCADE). NCADE is an air-launched weapon designed to engage short- and medium-range ballistic missiles in the boost and ascent phase of flight. The NCADE interceptor uses existing technologies, such as the design, aircraft interface and flight control system of Raytheon’s Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile, to provide a weapon that can be launched from a wide variety of aircraft, including smaller UAVs, the company said.

Source: <http://www.isrjournal.com/story.php?F=3227642>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Banking and Finance Sector**

12. *December 5, USA Today* – (National) **Check scams thrive, especially online.** Check schemes are spreading across the U.S. as scammers exploit the popularity of online auction, dating, and social-networking sites to find victims. Overseas investigators, working with U.S. postal inspectors, have arrested 77 people this year and intercepted \$2.1 billion in counterfeit checks headed for the U.S. The Federal Trade Commission sued two Canadian companies in October, accusing them of using fake checks to bilk U.S. consumers. Even as consumers reduce their use of checks, the creation of fake checks is booming. Fraudsters are using them to pay for goods advertised online or to convince people that they have won sweepstakes prizes. No one knows how much money customers have lost from bogus checks. But last year, banks alone lost \$271 million from fake checks — a 160 percent jump from three years earlier, according to the American Bankers Association (ABA). Customers are likely losing much more than that from check fraud, according to the National Consumers League, because some consumers present checks at check-cashing centers as well as at banks. All types of check-related fraud cost banks \$969 million in 2006, the ABA says. Counterfeit checks have become the second-most-common Internet fraud and the top telemarketing fraud



reported to the National Consumers League since it began tracking such scams in 2003. On average, victims lose \$3,000 to \$4,000 per scam, the league says.

Source: [http://www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/basics/2007-12-04-check-fraud\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/basics/2007-12-04-check-fraud_N.htm)

13. *December 5, Press-Citizen* – (Iowa) **County sheriff's office warns of eBay scam.** The Johnson County Sheriff's Office in Iowa is warning online car buyers to take caution when purchasing vehicles from online auction sites like eBay. The sheriff's office has received several complaints about Internet scams that use eBay look-alike or copycat sites. According to the sheriff's department, the complaints involve people who have been trying to buy a vehicle, usually one that sells for less than \$10,000. The would-be buyer then receives an e-mail notifying them that they have a second chance offer to bid on the vehicle and is directed to a phony site set up by the alleged scammers. According to the sheriff's office, the prospective purchaser thinks they are buying a vehicle on eBay, when in reality they are wiring money to someone involved in the scam. Based on the investigation into the cases, the sheriff said the money goes through multiple hands and is "virtually impossible" to determine where it ends up. He said that makes it difficult to file charges or prosecute, and the victim is unlikely to get their money back. He added that he believes it is likely a nationwide scam and recommended that people be cautious when conducting online transactions and not open e-mails from eBay that promise a second-chance offer.

Source: <http://www.press-citizen.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071205/NEWS01/712050341/1079>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Transportation Sector**

14. *December 4, KTTC TV Rochester* – (Minnesota) **Gas leak causes airport evacuation.** Air traffic was brought to a halt Tuesday afternoon at Rochester International Airport in Minnesota, after workers hit a natural gas line. The gas line break forced evacuations and actually shut down heat to the airport. With the gas leak potentially going into the control tower, 14 employees were evacuated, and all air traffic responsibilities were taken by the Federal Aviation Administration's Minneapolis Control Center. Minnesota Energy crews responded quickly to the leak. They were able to stop the gas flow and patch up the broken line in a few hours. The assistant airport manager said no flights had to be delayed or rerouted because of the leak, but traffic was grounded for about a half hour.

Source: <http://www.kttc.com/News/index.php?ID=20825>

15. *December 4, Courier-Journal* – (National) **NTSB recommends fire suppression on cargo planes.** Fire-suppression systems should be installed in cargo airplanes, the National Transportation Safety Board recommended Tuesday, in a hearing prompted by the in-flight fire of a UPS DC-8 last year. The board recommended that the Federal Aviation Administration provide clear guidance to passenger and cargo aircraft operators on how to respond in cases where there is evidence of fire, but no alarms are triggered. It also asked the FAA to ensure that detectors account for the effects of cargo and cargo containers on air flow around the sensors. It further called for floor-level

emergency exits on cargo planes and for firefighting and rescue personnel that serve airports to be fully familiar with cargo aircraft and with specialized aircraft firefighting equipment. The Independent Pilots Association, which represents about 3,000 UPS pilots, was “very pleased with the recommendations that the board has made,” said the chairman of the organization’s safety committee. He said there should not be “two levels of safety” for passenger and cargo planes. Measures already required on passenger aircraft, such as fire-suppression systems, should be standard on all planes, he said.

Source: <http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20071204/BUSINESS/71204045/1003>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Postal and Shipping Sector**

16. *December 4, National Terror Alert* – (Nebraska) **Suspicious white powder in envelope at INS appears non-toxic.** In an update of yesterday’s story, a suspicious powder found in the mail at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services offices in Lincoln Tuesday morning field tested negative for hazardous biological and chemical substances. The substance, which an employee discovered with an employment application, will be transported to the state public health laboratory at the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha for further testing.

Source: <http://www.nationalterroralert.com/updates/2007/12/04/lincoln-nebraska-suspicious-white-powder-in-envelope-at-ins-appears-non-toxic/>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Agriculture and Food Sector**

17. *December 5, Farm Futures* – (National) **Beef plants being scrutinized.** The Food Safety and Inspection Service are wrapping up a survey of 1,500 of the nation’s beef processing plants to make sure guidelines for reducing E. coli contamination are being followed. In 2002, the U.S. Department of Agriculture put out recommendations to meat plants on how to reduce contamination, but the investigation of the Topps hamburger recall revealed the Topps plant had stopped following those recommendations at some point. The results of the survey will be analyzed this month and the information used to draw up new policies and guidelines, and new rules and regulations if necessary.

Source:

<http://www.farmfutures.com/ME2/dirmod.asp?sid=CD26BEDECA4A4946A1283CC7786AEB5A&nm=News&type=news&mod=News&mid=9A02E3B96F2A415ABC72CB5F516B4C10&tier=3&nid=67A77D4F392B46F5A86382F0F20DD67B>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Water Sector**

18. *December 5, Muskegon Chronicle* – (Michigan) **Lakes Michigan, Huron nearing records low levels.** As Lakes Michigan and Huron near record low water levels, some

experts believe it is just a matter of time before they dip below that mark. According to federal monitoring data, water levels in the connected lakes hit a record low last Sunday, but the reading will not be considered a record until that water level is sustained for one month. Lower lake levels widen beaches but hurt the shipping industry by forcing freighters to lighten their loads to avoid running aground. Plunging lake levels can also drain coastal wetlands that support fish and wildlife. Low lake levels caused problems for some freighters trying to get into Muskegon Lake this summer; some ships had to lighten their loads by 15 percent to avoid running aground. The Mona Lake channel also dried up twice this year as Lake Michigan's water level continued its steady descent. Current water levels in Michigan and Huron are about 3.5 inches above the record low water levels recorded in 1964, according to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' data. But there are indications that water levels in the lakes, which have dropped nearly four feet since 1998 and are 26 inches below their long term average, will continue to fall.

Source: [http://blog.mlive.com/chronicle/2007/12/lakes\\_michigan\\_huron\\_nearing\\_r.html](http://blog.mlive.com/chronicle/2007/12/lakes_michigan_huron_nearing_r.html)

19. *December 4, Associated Press* – (Georgia) **Amid drought, South faces a water crisis.** Parts of the Southeast “may be down to just a few months of easily accessible water, and the faucets could run dry if reservoirs aren’t replenished soon.” The state of Georgia said it has lined up contracts with vendors to bring in bottled water and tanker trucks that could dispense water, but the state, the city of Atlanta, and the Georgia National Guard, which could be called into action by the governor to deliver the water, have yet to work out the details of exactly where the water would be distributed and how, saying it is too soon to say where it might be needed. Atlanta and other communities have yet to settle on a long-term solution if the water runs out. State and city officials have talked about building more reservoirs, pipelines and pumps, but they have not adopted a plan, and none of those ideas can be brought to fruition quickly.

Source:

<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5gBJZZdtL2zfIpHL0liEiNEYdo4MgD8TASQQ85>

20. *December 4, Associated Press* – (North Carolina) **N.C. governor calls for water conservation.** North Carolina's governor urged residents Tuesday to redouble conservation efforts through the holiday season after state figures show water usage crept back up in November. North Carolina continues to suffer through the worst drought in the state's recorded history, with local water systems serving 3.7 million people having issued mandatory water restrictions. The governor asked residents in middle of October to try to cut their water use by up to half by Halloween. Daily water use in the state's 25 largest systems fell nearly 30 percent by the end of the month compared to August levels. Since then, water use has crept back up so that total water use decline in November was only 18 percent. Fourteen water systems serving 470,000 residents have regular water supplies of less than 100 days given current conditions, according to the North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council. Durham is by far the largest system, serving 270,000 people.

Source: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/ap/fn/5351839.html>



## **Public Health and Healthcare Sector**

21. *December 5, Associated Press* – (Oklahoma) **West Nile virus sets state record.** A record of 102 people were infected with West Nile virus this year in Oklahoma, health officials said. Eight individuals, most of whom were older people with underlying health concerns, died. Previous highs were recorded in 2003, with 73 infections, and 2006, with 6 deaths. Tulsa County had the most cases, with 34, and the most deaths, with three.

Source:

[http://www.tulsaworld.com/lifestyle/article.aspx?articleID=071205\\_1\\_A15\\_spanc83455](http://www.tulsaworld.com/lifestyle/article.aspx?articleID=071205_1_A15_spanc83455)

22. *December 4, Agence France-Presse* – (International) **Bird flu pandemic could cost \$2 trillion.** A worldwide bird flu pandemic could have an economic impact of as much as two trillion dollars, a top World Bank official said Tuesday at an international conference on avian flu. To date, international donors have pledged \$2.3 billion to help countries counter the threat of a bird flu pandemic, and more than \$1 billion has been given to groups and organizations involved in the fight against bird flu, the acting vice president of the World Bank told delegates at the meeting in New Delhi, India. A joint United Nations/World Bank report released last week said the risk of a pandemic is still as great now as it was two years ago, even though many countries have improved their ability to respond to bird flu.

Source:

[http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/world/view\\_article.php?article\\_id=104828](http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/breakingnews/world/view_article.php?article_id=104828)

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## **Government Facilities Sector**

23. *December 5, KTRV 12Boise* – (Idaho) **Haz-mat scare leads to evacuation of State House.** A hazardous materials scare at the State House in Boise, Idaho, caused dozens of workers to be evacuated. Shortly after 9 a.m. Monday, crews spotted a piece of smoldering wood and were concerned that toxic chemicals may have caused the smoke. A hazmat team was called in to search the area. Hazmat members have several theories on what could have ignited the piece of wood. They say it may have been chemical dust that got wet, creating an acid, or possibly a spark from grinding that was going on. A sample of the wood has been sent to a lab for analysis. The entire building was eventually reopened and no one was injured.

Source: <http://www.fox12news.com/Global/story.asp?S=7444880>

24. *December 5, Santa Cruz Sentinel* – (California) **Bomb scare shuts down county facilities in Santa Cruz.** A duct tape-wrapped box shoved into a crevice in a retaining wall at the county offices in Santa Cruz, California, created a panic Tuesday morning. An employee walking through the parking lot spotted the shiny gray box, thought it “looked suspicious” and called 911, according to a police official. Officers ordered evacuations of that building and other areas nearby, closed parking lots, and brought in the bomb squad, firefighters, and paramedics. The area was shut down for almost three

hours while the bomb squad's robot scooted over to the box and checked it out with a camera that transmits to the bomb squad truck. After a three-hour evacuation and a response from the sheriff's office bomb squad, they learned that the box had only some papers in it and there is nothing illegal about that, according to police.

Source: <http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/story.php?storySection=Local&sid=51291>

25. *December 3, The Daily Journal* – (Illinois) **Lockdown in rural school district; ammo found.** Two schools were evacuated Monday morning after ammunition was found at Paxton-Buckley-Loda High School in Paxton, Illinois, officials said in a statement. It is not immediately clear whether there was evidence of a specific threat to the schools, staff or students. Both the junior and high schools in the PBL district were placed on lockdown, officials said, adding that the doors to two elementary schools in the area also were locked as a precaution. All high school extracurricular activities were canceled; junior high activities continued on schedule, but with a police presence. The incident remains under investigation.

Source: <http://www.daily-journal.com/archives/dj/display.php?id=409052>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Emergency Services Sector**

26. *December 4, eweek.com* – (New York) **New York City launches emergency e-alert pilot.** The mayor of New York City unveiled a pilot program to provide emergency information to citizens via e-mail, text messages, and phone alerts today. The initiative, called Notify NYC, "will give New Yorkers in the pilot communities access to information while serving as a proving ground for different technologies that could one day benefit the entire City," he said. Anyone can register to receive the service through the Notify NYC Web site, beginning December 4. The service, provided by Send Word Now, will launch December 10. Send Word Now, based in New York, provides alert services to a number of corporate and public customers, including the Port of Seattle, which currently has 750 users, the University of Delaware, at 60,000 users, and NYU and Boston University, at 40,000 users each, according to a company spokesperson. The Notify NYC system, however, has the potential to be the largest project the company has undertaken to date. The service will test two types of messaging systems to reach citizens. In half of the trial, the city will start sending alerts in SMS (Short Message Service) and e-mail messages, capped at 120 characters in length, with emergency information for Lower Manhattan and the Rockaways. At the same time, the city will distribute information for southwest Staten Island and the northeast Bronx by e-mail and recorded broadcast telephone calls, called "reverse-911," to users who register for the service. The city's Office of Emergency Management will be responsible for generating the messages. All the messages will also be posted on the service's Web site and distributed to dispatchers for the city's 311 and 911 services to aid them in answering inbound callers.

Source: <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0,1895,2228209,00.asp>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## Information Technology

27. *December 5, Computerworld* – (National) **Researcher: Ukrainian botnet sent Ron Paul spam.** The spam blamed on Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul more than a month ago originated with a Ukrainian spam operation, a senior security researcher with SecureWorks Inc. said today. According to him, the Ron Paul-related spam that flooded inboxes in late October can be traced to a botnet of approximately 3,000 compromised computers, all infected by a Trojan horse called Srizbi that in turn installed a spam-spewing bot -- dubbed "Reactor Mailer" -- onto each hijacked machine. It was Reactor Mailer that sent the spam touting Paul and his positions. Starting October 27 and ending October 30, the spam promoted the Texas congressman after a televised weekend debate, and featured subject headings such as "Ron Paul Wins GOP Debate!" and "Ron Paul Exposes Federal Reserve!" Researchers at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, who analyzed samples of the spam at the time, said that they had no reason to believe that the Paul campaign was behind the junk e-mail. A spokesman for Paul quickly denied any knowledge of the scam.

Source:

[http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9051040&source=rss\\_news10](http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9051040&source=rss_news10)

28. *December 5, CNetnews.com* – (National) **OpenOffice.org releases security patch.** The OpenOffice.org community has issued a patch for a "highly critical" security vulnerability in OpenOffice 2.3 and prior versions, according to a security advisory issued by Secunia on Wednesday. A security flaw in a third party default database engine module, HSQLDB, shipped with OpenOffice 2.3 and prior versions, could allow malicious attackers to launch arbitrary code. The vulnerabilities could be exploited by manipulating the database documents processing, according to a security advisory issued by OpenOffice.org. OpenOffice.org is asking users to download OpenOffice version 2.3.1. OpenOffice 2.3 was released last September, shortly before security researchers reported vulnerabilities in OpenOffice 2.0.4 and earlier versions. The security flaws could allow attackers to gain control of users' systems via maliciously crafted TIFF files.

Source: [http://www.news.com/8301-10784\\_3-9829329-7.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1\\_3-0-5](http://www.news.com/8301-10784_3-9829329-7.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1_3-0-5)

29. *December 4, CNetnews.com* – (National) **Predictions for 2008: A massive data meltdown.** A vice president in the eco-computing team at Sun Microsystems predicted a massive data center failure over the next year. At a Monday dinner with reporters, he predicted that such a failure, and the ensuing panicked response, would be a crisis on par with what followed the first internet worm in 1988, which infected about five percent of the Unix boxes on the Internet, caused community uproar, and helped spur the security industry. Though just a prediction, conditions in the industry suggest it is possible, according to a blogger on CNetnews.com. Data centers have mushroomed with the flood of processes and jobs being turned over to the Internet, he said. Companies have built up their data centers, but even with technologies like virtualization it has been tough to keep up. At some point, a data center is going to crash, he said, and the response could

be frenzied.

Source: [http://www.news.com/8301-10784\\_3-9828570-7.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1\\_3-0-5](http://www.news.com/8301-10784_3-9828570-7.html?part=rss&subj=news&tag=2547-1_3-0-5)

### Internet Alert Dashboard

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Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## Communications Sector

30. *December 4, US News & World Report* – (National; International) **The problem of space debris.** In January, 2007, China destroyed its old Feng Yun 1-C weather satellite in an antisatellite weapon test that NASA called “the single worst contamination of low Earth orbit during the past 50 years.” The debris field caused by the Feng Yun explosion extends from 125 miles above the surface of Earth to 2,500 miles. Air Force engineers have calculated that it will take a century for all the pieces to fall out of orbit. Many of the debris chunks are big enough to threaten satellites and equipment in lower Earth orbit, including the international space station. The Air Force Space Command has identified and is tracking 2,229 pieces of debris from the test that are at least as large as a softball. “Anything that size or larger, if it collided with a satellite, would equate to instantaneous death for a satellite,” said the former administrator of the space surveillance network at the Joint Space Operations Center at Vandenberg Air Force Base. The center, which continues to find more Feng Yun remnants, saw a 20 percent jump—to 11,800—in the size of its catalog of space objects of concern, including satellites and debris, after the test. (In all, analysts track more than 17,300 objects in space, but the rest have yet to be identified with certainty.) Chinese scientists told their western counterparts that their calculations suggest the risk of collision has increased by less than 1 percent. But U.S. analysts have seen the number of close calls between satellites and debris more than double since the test. In an average week, said the former administrator, there will be up to 200 incidents where a piece of the Feng Yun passes within 3 miles of one of America’s 400 satellites.

Source: <http://www.usnews.com/articles/news/2007/12/04/the-problem-of-space-debris.html>

31. *December 4, Boygeniusreport.com* – (National) **T-Mobile confirms flooding.** T-Mobile today confirmed web reports that the company’s main data center was down due to flooding in the Seattle, Washington, area, and that the main [www.t-mobile.com](http://www.t-mobile.com) website was offline. In the official statement, T-mobile said: “Severe flooding stemming from a powerful storm has affected a facility in Western Washington that houses some T-Mobile business systems. Our wireless network is operating at normal service levels. Various other T-Mobile operations may be temporarily offline or otherwise impacted. T-Mobile is working around-the-clock to restore the impacted systems. We

apologize for any inconvenience this may cause our valued customers.” Additional web reporting stated that the main website was up Wednesday, but that some account information remained unavailable.

Source: <http://www.boygeniusreport.com/2007/12/04/t-mobile-confirms-flooding-mass-chaos-babies-crying/>

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Commercial Facilities Sector**

### **32. *December 4, Seattle Times* – (Northwest) Storm disrupts businesses in some areas.**

Monday’s storm caused business disruptions in some of the Pacific Northwest, including a flooded business park in Bothell, Washington, and the wind-battered coast. The storm struck during what is supposed to be one of the busiest weeks of the year for retailers. Monday’s closure of Interstate 5, which is costing millions of dollars every day, caused delivery delays for Portland, Oregon, based Fred Meyer, which has about 40 stores in the Puget Sound area. In Grays Harbor, where high winds caused widespread power outages, the Imperium Renewables biodiesel plant stopped producing fuel and suffered minor damage. The \$78 million plant, which is the largest biodiesel plant in the U.S., should restart operations as soon as power is restored.

Source:

[http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/business/technology/2004050882\\_stormbiz04.html](http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/html/business/technology/2004050882_stormbiz04.html)

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **National Monuments & Icons Sector**

Nothing to report

[\[Return to top\]](#)

## **Dams Sector**

### **33. *December 5, Chico Enterprise-Record* – (California) Work on J Levee reveals dire**

**situation of structure.** At Tuesday’s meeting of the Glenn County Board of Supervisors, the flood control manager passed out photographs revealing a hole made by a burrowing animal and a streak of sand in the middle of the interior of the J Levee near Hamilton City, California. Both problems were exposed by workers excavating the back side of the levee. Although the emergent need to fix the levee at Sacramento River Mile 200.6 has been noted for months now because of the severe erosion, the presence of sand beneath the surface makes it a prime candidate for a “boil” to appear, the manager said. A boil occurs when an animal burrows through the levee, and rising water pushes silt or sand into the hole, weakening the area. As water seeps through the softened area, it can ultimately cause the levee to break during high water from storms. Besides the repair site, rodent holes are visible at other areas along the entire levee, although the extent of damage is not known. This winter, the levee will be watched carefully for signs

of boils in those sections.

Source: [http://www.chicoer.com/news/ci\\_7637299](http://www.chicoer.com/news/ci_7637299)

34. *December 4, Chronicle* – (Washington) **Water overcomes Centralia dike.** A failure or overtopping of the Long Road dike in southern Centralia, Washington, sent water flooding into neighborhoods at an alarming rate overnight. The commander of the Centralia Emergency Operations Center said that as far as they knew, no levies had been lost but that water had apparently spilled over some. A National Guard helicopter was in the air at first light this morning assessing the damage. Whatever happened, it sent water into areas residents agreed were unusual for flooding.

Source:

[http://www.chronline.com/story.php?subaction=showfull&id=1196799858&archive=&start\\_from=&ucat=1](http://www.chronline.com/story.php?subaction=showfull&id=1196799858&archive=&start_from=&ucat=1)

[\[Return to top\]](#)

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